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NO CHANGE IN CLASS. (U)

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**NSC BRIEFING**

**25 March 1959**

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**S. ARMS**

- I. Moroccan Defense Minister inquired 23 March whether US would supply some \$19 to \$23,000,000 worth of military equipment to modernize Morocco's 31,000 man army.
- A. This inquiry is follow-up of tentative approach made last January, as well as inquiry made during King's Washington visit Nov 1957.
- B. Defense Minister implied King under considerable pressure to continue procurement from Soviet Bloc.

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- C. Materiel desired from US includes unstated quantities of tanks, trucks, communications equipment, machine guns, submachine guns and ammunition, fighter and observation aircraft, and helicopters.
- II. Morocco, moreover, apparently is following Tunisian pattern of refusing to procure arms from France. Government has in past resented French limitations on ammunition deliveries; prefers new US equipment to obsolescent French materiel.
- A. Moroccans likely to resist suggestions they continue to rely on French supply.
- B. Having dickered unsuccessfully last year for materiel and ammunition factory from Italians, Moroccans probably would not seek arms from other Western Europe source since they assume French influence would extend there.
- III. Compliance with Moroccan request probably would create new tensions in French-American relations while refusal would affect negotiations on US bases in Morocco.

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